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ABSTRACT

Based on a review of the literature, the author summarizes and evaluates research on the role of principals in effective schools and suggests additional factors needing study. Her review identifies nine features of effective principals and schools, involving commitment to academic goals, academic expectations, school climates that facilitate learning, time utilization, and principals' instructional leadership, personality traits, interpersonal style, organizational potency, and goal monitoring and evaluation activities. Six assumptions in the literature are discussed by the author, including the assumptions that principals' observed behaviors are causally related to observed outcomes and that schools are tightly coupled systems. From this discussion she proposes a new model that adds the variables of social context, principal characteristics, and inschool mediating processes to the existing variables of principals' behaviors and educational outcomes. She reviews further literature to suggest specific social contexts (such as federal, state, teacher union, district, and community pressures) and mediating processes (including schools' demographic, institutional, interpersonal, and labor relations characteristics) that should be accounted for in research on effective principals. Finally, the author discusses the usual criteria used for school effectiveness--test scores--and suggests adding other criteria, such as school attendance rates. Two appendices reorder the bibliography by topic and propose an agenda for future research on principal effectiveness. (RW)

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EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS: WHAT DO WE KNOW FROM VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL LITERATURES?

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EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS

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The purpose of this report is to summarize and critically evaluate several bodies of literature bearing on effective schools and the role that principals play in creating them. This report arises from a growing awareness that principals may have important influences on schools. Research on such diverse problems as desegregation, curricular innovation, implementation of federally mandated programs for the handicapped, and school safety has converged on the common theme that principals play a pivotal role in shaping school practices. The first task of this report, therefore, is to summarize various conclusions about the importance of principals and how their actions may affect schools. Aggregating these research findings brings out certain assumptions that are implicit in much of the effective schools literature, and suggests that many of these assumptions need to be critically examined. Explicating the assumptions on which the effective schools literature rests suggests the need for an alternative conceptual model that may overcome some of the limitations of the traditional effective schools literature. Hence the second major purpose of this report is to suggest additional factors that need to be taken into account when considering how principals may create more or less effective schools. We stress that principals cannot pursue a single course of action without considering the social contexts in which schools operate and the social processes within schools that mediate a principal's

efforts. Finally, we caution that no single measure, for example, reading test scores alone, should be used to assess the effectiveness of a principal. Because of the multi-faceted nature of the principal's job, multiple criteria need to be brought to bear.

To accomplish these objectives, we reviewed several distinct bodies of literature. (Each of the topic areas mentioned below and the sources that were consulted within them appear in Appendix A.) First, we considered materials that may be designated the "effective schools" literature. In addition to this body of literature, we examined research that was not originally designed to study principals per se, but that concluded that principals are important for the successful operation of schools and suggested specific ways that they might contribute to the effective operation of schools. Such literature includes research on school desegregation, curricular change and implementation, research on supervision in schools, program evaluation, team teaching, the utilization of research and development, studies of violence and safety in schools, and selected literature on collective bargaining in schools. All of the sources cited in Appendix A were examined. Those sources that were useful to us in preparing this critical summary are listed in the final bibliography of this report.

Originally we had hoped to do a meta analysis that would catalogue and analyze the correlations between principals' behaviors and some criterion variable like pupil performance. However, this did not prove to

be possible for several reasons. First, very few correlation coefficients were found in the literature we reviewed, and second, other problems of conceptualization and research design in the existing literature made such an analysis seem premature.

This report begins by reviewing and summarizing the major conclusions that can be drawn about the importance of the principal for effective schools. This review raises a number of questions about the literature. We then critically examine the major assumptions that underlie much of the effective schools literature. This discussion prompts us to generate a fuller explanatory framework for considering how principals may help to create more effective schools.

Several aspects of this framework, specifically what we label contexts and processes, are discussed to suggest their influence on how principals perform their jobs. The issue of principal effectiveness is also critically analyzed. The report concludes with a summary of what we know based on the research that has been surveyed. Appendix B to the report contains a number of questions that might be addressed in future research on school principals.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRINCIPAL

The literature we reviewed abounds with statements about the general importance of the principal for the school. "The principal is the key to

the quality of life in a school," asserts Sarason (1971). "The most crucial factor (in any school) is the quality of administrative leadership in it," stresses Doll (1969). With respect to relatively more effective schools, generally judged by the higher reading scores of its students, the importance of the principal's leadership was underscored by Edmonds (1979) and Brookover et al. (1979). "Among school-level factors that affect reading achievement, the leadership role of the principal is one of the most important," suggest Armor et al. (1976).

A similar theme echoes through the change literature. The principal is the "keystone to change," aver Hall et al. (1980: 20). The active support of principals is essential for the institutionalization of new programs, such as "open education," write Berman and McLaughlin (1978). Conversely, in schools where the principal and teachers were not involved in planned educational change, projects to initiate change deteriorated and failed (Herriot and Gross, 1979).

Hargrove et al.'s study of Public Law 94-142 also underlines the importance of the principal. In seven out of ten high performance elementary schools, "the principal is the most important factor contributing to the school's performance" in implementing equal education for handicapped children (Hargrove et al., 1981: 156). Studies of social changes such as desegregation also highlight the importance of the principal (Noblit, 1979; Metz, 1978). In a related vein, research on school violence suggests that the principal may be a key figure in

maintaining order and safety in the schools. Schools that have made a dramatic turnaround from periods of violence are notable for having principals who are visible and available to students and staff. This was true even in larger schools. Parents and community people could also get through to the principal (Violent Schools, Safe Schools, 1978: 169).

One wonders if this stress on the importance of principals is unanimous. While we found no studies that claim that principals never make a difference, we did find several which qualify the nature of the principal's power and authority. Rutter et al. did not single out secondary school principals for special attention in their discussion of what affects a school's ethos. Their study focuses on secondary schools, and one key qualifying factor appears to be the educational level of the school. Principals may not have the same impact in secondary schools as they do in elementary schools. For instance, Hargrove et al. found that "administrative leadership is not a dominant factor in the implementation of 94-142 in senior high schools" (1981: 199), although it does seem to be in elementary schools.

Aside from educational level as a factor qualifying the impact of principals, several authors have questioned whether the power and authority of principals is being undercut by federal regulations (Hill, 1980; Grant, 1981) or by the increasing power of the district as reflected in such changes as the principal's loss of discretionary budget control (Mann, 1981: 4).

In addition to these qualifications, there is the question of specificity. What is it, scholars such as Erickson (1981) wonder, about the principal's role performance that makes it so important? A number of recurrent themes may be gleaned from this literature suggesting how and why principals may make a difference.

II. EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS: SOME RECURRENT THEMES

When we review and summarize the effective schools literature, a number of distinctive themes emerge. Effective schools and effective principals are more likely to display the following features:

1) Consensus on and commitment to academic goals in the school.
2) A climate of high academic expectations and respect.
3) Effective instructional leadership on the part of the principal.
4) Certain personality traits on the part of the principal.
5) A certain interpersonal style on the part of the principal.
6) A principal able to facilitate learning objectives, including the creation of an orderly, reasonably well-disciplined climate.
7) The principal's organizational potency.
8) The effective use of time by principals and teachers.
9) The monitoring and evaluation of achievement goals by the principal.

Each of these observations needs to be illustrated and discussed further, before we can evaluate them and consider their limitations.

1. Consensus on and Commitment to Achievement Goals

The implication in the literature is that an effective principal has a clear vision of his/her goals and is strongly oriented to those goals (Rosenblum and Jastrzab, 1980). This vision was reflected in the principal's long-term goals and visions for their schools and teachers (Ball et al., 1980: 24). It was important for the principal to have this clear vision, or else he/she spent too much time putting out "brush fires" (Blumberg and Greenfield in Fullan, 1981: 288) or in "administrivia" (Levine and Doll, 1971: 65). In high-achieving compared to low-achieving schools, principals emphasized instruction as the most important goal of the school (Brookover et al., 1979: 95). In its most specific form, principals set a clear achievement goal, e.g., "60% of the students were to read at grade level or above" by a specific time (Venezky, 1979). This clearly stated objective was correlated with improved reading scores in elementary schools.

One indicator of consensus on and commitment to the goal of academic achievement is reflected in the way principals expected teachers to give of their personal time. In the schools with higher achievement, teachers were willing to do this, but in those with lower achievement, teachers were not willing to give extra time unless they were paid for it (Brookover et al., 1979: 115). One way that principals might do this is suggested by the Safe Schools study which noted the importance of the principal as a role model for teachers, students, and the community. If

the principal put in long hours, was fair-minded in dealing with student complaints, and attended student activities in the school and the community, that set a positive tone for both teachers and students (1978: 169).

The exemplary principals in the Hargrove et al. study of equal education for handicapped children were able to "instill pride in teachers about the educational purposes and achievements of the school" (1981: 238), although Hargrove does not indicate exactly how they were able to do this. One means noted by other research is the creation of high educational expectations.

2. Climate of High Academic Expectations

Related to the goal of high academic achievement is the setting of a climate in which students are expected to learn. It seems important for the principal to hold such expectations and to convey them effectively to both teachers and students. In one comparative study, the relatively more effective principal held clearer expectations than the less effective principal (Metz, 1978).

In schools with high-achieving students both principals and teachers held high expectations and in low-achieving schools they held low expectations (Brookover et al., 1979: 95, 108). The principal's expectations were conveyed to teachers in part through inservice training and by frequent communications with teachers. In higher-achieving

schools, principals did not let teachers "write-off" students as non-learners, particularly because of their ethnicity or social class. In low-achieving schools the principal helped to depress the teachers' expectations for their students, for example, by saying the pupils aren't doing too badly, for students of their background (Brookover et al., 1979: 130). Furthermore, the principal's lack of "push" toward the teacher was carried over to the classroom by teachers, who in turn expected little of their students (Brookover et al., 1979: 116). In predominantly black schools, high principal expectations were even more importantly related to achievement than they were in white schools (Brookover et al., 1979).

Along with the assumption of high expectations for pupil learning, principals and teachers in the high-achieving schools studied by Brookover et al. are much more likely to "assume responsibility for teaching basic reading and math skills and are much more committed to doing so" than are the staffs of declining schools, who felt that there is not much that teachers can do to influence the achievement of their students. Instead of taking responsibility themselves, they blame the students or their parents (Brookover and Lezotte, 1977).

A recurrent characteristic of successful schools concerns the amount of respect shown to all the participants. The principal helps to set a tone of respect for teachers and students. "In the words of one principal, 'It should be no secret to school people that the first essential ingredient is RESPECT!' He said all persons in the school must

be able to demand respect and to give respect. This includes, teachers, custodians, administrators, aides, bus drivers, and students. He made this point in an open letter to 'Co-workers' stressing that all adults--regardless of their positions-- are role models for students. Further, he stated that the first meetings with students should begin with 'fairness, firmness, and friendliness.' If his behavior is consistent and persists throughout the year, his letter continued, it should be a positive deterrent to undesirable situations. Caring and friendliness shown to students in all deliberations were the second point on his list. Nevertheless, he said one must not be afraid to show anger or disapproval in certain situations. The third ingredient listed was 'Involvement and participation of students in constructive activities and of the community in the hopes and dreams of the school'" (Safe Schools Vol. I, 1978: 245). The principal may be a major voice in setting a tone of respect in a school. Expecting students to learn and assuming instructional leadership to help them learn are closely connected to treating them with respect.

3. Instructional Leadership on the Part of the Principal

A number of reports emphasize the role of the principal as the instructional leader of the school (Edmonds, 1979; Hargrove et al., 1981: 238). Even the Safe Schools study stressed that successful principals seemed to have a "strong commitment to educational leadership as well as control over the school" (Vol. I, 1978: 169). Some, for example, Venezky

(1979), indicate that the principals in schools with higher reading scores were "openly and obviously achievement-oriented." Weber (1971) noted that principals in effective schools helped to decide on instructional strategies, but he didn't say on what basis principals did this or how principals knew what instructional strategies to use. Brookover et al. (1979: 92) noticed that principals in high achieving schools recommended extracurricular reading to their teachers. What did they recommend? Did teachers read what was recommended? What effect did it have on them? Pursuing such questions was beyond the scope of the Brookover et al. study.

Miles suggests that principals need to provide clarity and specific support for what teachers are to do (cited in Fullan, 1981: 288). Several ways this might be done are mentioned by other researchers. Some principals supported attendance by their teachers at workshops or actually ran such workshops themselves (Brookover et al., 1979: 131). Fullan stresses the need for principals to become directly involved (in curricular change for example) to meet, sit down, discuss, keep informed, and be knowledgable so that they can help their teachers (1981: 281). It isn't enough for the principal simply to convey the expectation of academic achievement without also stressing teaching strategies and behaviors that could be used to achieve those expectations (Brookover et al., 1979: 131; Levine and Doll, 1971: 56). In the higher achieving schools, principals were able to get teachers to use positive rather than

negative reinforcement with students, which is an example of one behavior that might be used (Brookover et al., 1979: 97). In their study of change implementation and improved student performance, Berman and McLaughlin (1978) report that principals participated in project training activities for the staff and were able to give the staff needed information and skills. They don't say what these skills were, however. The principal's participation did show that he considered the project important, they felt, which may have been a significant mediating process. The importance of a change or an instructional strategy can also be conveyed by establishing incentives for using them. Armor et al. (1976) observed that principals established incentives for greater professionalism and innovation, but don't say what incentives were used. Also, they do not indicate what behavioral changes they considered to be indicators of more professional behavior.

In order to function as the instructional leaders of a school, principals need to free themselves of many bureaucratic and administrative tasks. Some principals had their secretaries and administrative assistants do much of the routine paperwork in their jobs, so that they could provide instructional leadership (Brookover et al., 1979: 92; Hill et al., 1980). Under what conditions is such an arrangement possible?

This emphasis in the literature on instructional leadership raises the question of whether all principals can be equally effective instructional leaders. Are there certain personal traits, skills,

knowledge, or interpersonal styles that principals need in order to be effective instructional leaders? While the literature seldom considers most of these traits, there is some discussion of personality and interpersonal styles.

4. Personality Traits of Principals

Effective principals seem to have very strong personalities. They are "forceful, dynamic, and have a high energy level" (Egerton, 1977). They have a "dynamic energy about them, a sense of commitment and direction for attaining their goals" (Hall et al., 1980: 24). They are proactive, assertive, quick to assume initiative, they take charge, and they desire to make the school over in their own image (Rosenblum and Jastrzab, 1980). Principals that helped to produce a climate in their schools that was favorable to the implementation of Public Law 94-142 were energetically involved in all facets of life in their schools. For them, "leadership is an active pursuit" (Hargrove et al., 1980: 156).

"Strong leadership" on the part of the principal is important for improved reading, suggests Weber (1971). But what does he mean by strong leadership? How is it shown in the school? Does it have uniform effects? Why is it important? Principals may even be "tyrannical," suggests Edmonds. How are forceful or energetic personalities received? Do they always have positive consequences? Might not teachers react in different ways to such forceful personalities, depending upon a wide variety of

conditions? What are some of those conditions? These questions remain unanswered by the literature.

Several other important personality traits have also been identified. Some of these may be less controversial, but it remains to be demonstrated that they are universally helpful. Rosenblum, for example, noted that successful principals have "ontological security," welcome new ideas, have high tolerance for ambiguity, are analytical, and adopt a practical stance toward life. [It is not clear, however, how these traits were measured, what outcomes they were correlated with, and that principals who were low on these traits did badly.]

Principals' locus of control is related to how they behave in schools, specifically what and how much they will initiate, suggests Sarason (1971: 143). Those who believe that more of their own destiny is within their own control are more likely to act strongly and to test the system's tolerance for diversity than are principals who believe that their fate is controlled by forces beyond their own control.

5. Principals' Interpersonal Style

No clear pattern of results appears with respect to how principals' interpersonal style is related to educational outcomes. On the one hand, Brookover and Lezotte (1977: 67) report that principals in declining schools appear to be more permissive and to emphasize informal and collegial relationships with teachers more than do principals in improving

schools. In the latter, principals are more likely to emphasize their role as staff supervisor (Brookover et al., 1979: 100). The principal of one low-achieving school spent time socially with teachers, which may have weakened the supervisory relationship (Brookover et al., 1979: 100). This finding could be posed as a hypothesis to test in a variety of settings, as follows: effective principals are more likely to keep some social distance from their teaching staffs than are less effective principals.

One study of desegregation suggests that the principal who achieved greater harmony among the teachers was more manipulative (e.g., withheld information from teachers) and publicly reproved teachers who did not maintain order (Metz, 1978: 194, 196). These two findings suggest that social distance and social control are key elements in a principal's interpersonal style. They appear to be contradicted, however, by Mikkelsen's (1980) observation that "humanistically" oriented supervisors create open climates and hence better reading scores.

This apparent contradiction may be reconciled by Hargrove et al. who concluded that highly successful principals followed a leadership style that they called "authoritative democratic" (1981: 157). Such principals involved their faculties in school decision-making processes and encouraged genuine exchange among teachers in this process. Teachers see these principals as open to suggestions and willing to consider alternatives. At the same time, they view their principals as "strong, decisive, and always in control of the situation at hand." This suggests

clearly that principals need to strike a balance between openness and decisiveness. Either one to extreme may not be effective. Exemplary principals make their intentions clear but they also consult with teachers about those intentions (Hargrove et al., 1981: 237). The principal of one low-performing school (with respect to the implementation of P.L. 94-142) was considered arbitrarily authoritarian and was not well received by his teachers (Hargrove et al., 1981: 164).

Effective principals are responsive to teacher and student input regarding school policy. Some include students and teachers in decision-making, while others willingly spell out the procedures that will be followed in making a decision and then follow those procedures openly and honestly (Safe Schools, Vol. I, 1978: 170).

Successful school administrators appear to be skillful at leading through indirection. "The key to effectiveness through indirection is understanding the school system and schools as political systems which must be managed to build coalitions of support. One appeals to the perspectives and incentives of those whom one would persuade and build(s) support continuously across time because policy is never finished nor are decisions ever finally implemented" (Hargrove et al., 1981: 64). Sometimes even dynamic efforts by principals did not lead to improvements because the faculty was not on board (Safe Schools, Vol. I, 1978: 170). Clearly good ideas and dynamism cannot succeed without the capacity to persuade others of the value of those ideas or programs. A similar

balance appears to be needed between interpersonal relations, on the one hand, and task-orientation on the other. As Levine and Doll (1969) among others point out, simply having good human relations between principals and teachers or among the teachers is not enough to increase what children learn in school. On the other side, new programs that fail to consider the social and political relations within schools encounter strong resistance (Mann, 1981: 14). This helps to explain why Gorton and McIntyre (1978) found that among senior high school principals, the most important asset was the ability to work with people.

6. The Principal as Facilitator

In addition to identifying a number of constructive actions that effective principals take, the literature suggests that good principals serve as facilitators of other people's actions (such as teachers') either by minimizing factors that may disrupt the learning process or by obtaining support and materials. Armor et al. (1976) mention this, but do not give any examples of outside factors that can disrupt the learning process.

To the degree that disorder or discipline problems interfere with learning, effective principals may try to minimize such disruptions. Effective schools have orderly, relatively quiet, pleasant atmospheres, noted Weber, (1971). Numerous other observers have also stressed some aspect of discipline within relatively more effective schools. In every

successful school in the Safe Schools study, the structure of order was described as "firm, fair, and most of all, consistent" (Vol.I, 1978: 169). Rutter et al. (1979: 121) imply that principals help to set general discipline standards for the whole school in the higher achieving schools. Schools where staff and teachers shared perspectives about discipline had better outcomes than schools where they did not share perspectives. Little emphasis on order or structure may have hurt achievement in the St. Louis schools (Levine and Doll, 1971). Order was low in the schools with poor achievement, while principals in the better schools required a sense of discipline and order each day (Brookover et al., 1979: 95, 131). The principal in the schools with higher achievement was more of a disciplinarian (Brookover and Lezotte, 1979: 30), and the staff was strict but not mean (Brookover et al., 1979: 101).

As the Safe Schools report notes: "While the principal's personal leadership style is important, we found that his ability to initiate a structure of order in the school was equally important." A key feature of the discipline in a school is that it be perceived by teachers and students alike as fair. It seems to be essential that both punishments and rewards be given out in an even-handed fashion" (Safe Schools, Vol. I, 1978: 169).

Principals may also try to reduce the number of non-instructional interruptions that teachers experience in their classrooms, whether to collect lunch money, listen to announcements over the P.A. system, deal

with a stray animal, or whatever. This dimension refers to ways that principals may be able to minimize interference with the instructional activity within schools. Exemplary principals also simplify the administrative tasks of teachers (Hargrove et al., 1981: 237).

Principals may need to exclude wasteful activities from their own lives as well. Successful principals are not bogged down in "administravism", suggest Rosenblum and Jastrzab (1980), although it is not clear what activities they classify this way. In short, principals may be able to facilitate learning by reducing negative conditions.

Principals may operate as facilitators by providing positive support as well. Successful principals were good at acquiring the materials needed for instruction (Rosenblum and Jastrzab). One of the principals who was particularly successful in implementing P.L. 94-142 was "unusually adept at getting what is desired from the higher levels of the school system and is able to bring this talent into the service of children with special needs" (Hargrove et al., 1981: 141). Success at procuring needed materials may be due to both administrative skills and school district conditions. What are the skills and conditions that are necessary to secure supplies? The literature we reviewed is thin with respect to these processes.

Collegiality among teachers may also be facilitated by efficient administrators, suggests Hargrove et al. (1981: 160). Effective principals help to provide a climate for the personal and professional

growth of teachers, notes Doll (1969). For example, one principal helped teachers learn problem-solving skills and reinforced the power assumed by teachers (Blumberg in Derr, 1974: 100).

Little (1981) illustrates a number of ways that principals can facilitate the collegiality and instructional success of teachers. Principals can support certain norms by announcing that they hold particular expectations of teachers, e.g., at faculty meetings (1981: 57-8). Moreover, those expectations can be expressed as practices that teachers can follow, for instance, participating in weekly inservice meetings (1981: 59). Principals can also act in such a way that their own behavior provides a model of the norms they support. One principal who expected teachers to be evaluated by their peers invited teachers to evaluate his performance as principal (Little, 1981: 60). Principals fortify or weaken norms by the way they sanction teachers, using internal resources such as schedules or materials budgets, access to outside resources by decisions on special proposals or release time, or informal recognition of a job well done (Little, 1981: 62-3). Finally, principals protect teachers who are accomplishing what they want them to be doing. They may do this by acting as an effective "buffer" between the district's needs and the needs of the teachers (1981: 64-5). In order to operate as effective facilitators, principals need a certain amount of what might be called organizational potency.

7. The Principal's Organizational Potency

"When necessary, school energy and resources (in effective schools) can be diverted to further the central objective of pupils acquiring basic school skills" (Edmonds, 1979: 22). How do principals do this? Hall et al. (1980) believe that the principal functions as the resource and reward allocator, which presumes they have the power to do what Edmonds suggests. In successful schools, the principal is able to marshall resources for instructional goals (Rosenblum and Jastrzab 1980). This power, however, must be seen as dependent upon both situational factors and the principal's own conception of his/her situation. Within a particular principal's context, what resources and rewards are within his/her control to manipulate and allocate? Restraints may be set by legal conditions, collective bargaining agreements, past history, or a variety of other factors that need to be considered. On the other hand, while contextual constraints unarguably exist, individuals can react to and hence act in quite different ways given the same set of conditions. The range of individual practices among the principals in any given system is quite great, and a major factor that explains that variation is how individual principals conceive of the system (Sarason, 1971: 140). Principals need to believe that the system will tolerate diversity in order to act in ways that create such diversity (Sarason, 1971: 140).

8. Time Use

Time on task is a concept that has revealed some striking effects on pupil performance. There is some suggestion that the concept may apply to being an effective principal as well. Specifically, the time spent in a building may affect the way a principal is perceived by the teachers in the building and what that principal can do. In one of the schools with low student achievement, Brockover et al. (1979) found that one principal was dividing his time between two schools. The principal spent half his time in one and half in the other school. As a result, the school staff did not know if he was really "with" their building or if he was simply an agent of the school district. When he was there, he did administrative work and handled discipline problems, but he did not serve as an instructional leader. Principals in schools with safety problems were perceived as spending inordinate amounts of time outside the building in the community or at central administrative offices. These findings suggest that the amount of time principals spend in a school, what they are doing when they are not in the school, and how they spend their time while they are at school may all play a role in how principals influence their schools.

Another way of looking at principals' time use is in terms of where they spend their time. How much of it is spent in their office and how much in the halls or visiting classrooms? Relatively more effective principals "get out of the office," noted Rosenblum and Jastrzab (1980).

Schools that had problems of order were more likely to have principals who stayed in their offices and were seldom seen in the hallways (Safe Schools, Vol. I: 169). If being out of the office is related to implementing change, school safety, or pupil performance, why is this the case? What do principals do outside of their office that contributes to various educational outcomes? (We will return to this question in the next section on Principals as Evaluators.)

Time on instructional tasks is related to pupil achievement (Brookover et al., 1979: 103, 86, 95). How can principals encourage teachers to spend more time on instructional tasks? We have already mentioned the possibility that some principals may reduce interruptions, thereby making it possible for teachers to spend more time on instruction. Another way that principals may affect how much time teachers spend teaching is through their evaluation.

9. Principals as Evaluators

In relatively more effective schools, principals did not simply hold clear goals for student achievement, they personally evaluated student progress on those goals (Brookover and Lezotte, 1977; Edmonds, 1979; Venezky, 1979). Edmonds stresses that teachers and principals must "remain constantly aware of pupil progress in relation to instructional objectives (Edmonds, 1979: 32). In declining schools, principals put less emphasis on evaluating a school's effectiveness in providing a basic

education for students (Brookover and Lezotte, 1977: 67). In one such school, the assistant principal kept the achievement records and monitored student progress, suggesting that the principal considered achievement a lower priority than something else. Principals in the higher-achieving schools made unannounced classroom visits and provided critiques to teachers of their performance (Brookover et al., 1979: 92, 131). Similarly, Rosenblum and Jastrzab stressed that successful principals visited classrooms and responded to what they saw. Both teachers and pupils received useful feedback on their performance (Cohen, 1979: 47). In at least one effective school, the principal ranked teachers by their ability to teach reading (Armor et al., 1976). Dornbush and Scott (1975), like Katz and Kahn in their studies of industry (1976), found that teachers were more satisfied when the evaluation criteria were known, when teachers were evaluated frequently, and when they received frequent reports on their evaluations. This suggests that, at least under some conditions, teachers can respond favorably to principal evaluations. These conditions need to be specified, however, since teachers do not always respond well to having principals come in to observe their classes and evaluate them. How do principals go about observing classes? Do they ask teachers to keep their doors open, use intercoms, announced or unannounced personal visits, or what? How long do they stay? Do they take notes? Are permanent records kept? What follow-through occurs after the evaluation? These are some of the mediating processes that affect

evaluations. Is classroom observation received more favorably in elementary than in secondary schools because of the absence of disciplinary departments, the sex composition of teaching staffs, or some other factors?

The themes generated by the effective schools literature rest on a number of assumptions. A better understanding of how principals can improve schools requires that we make these assumptions explicit and critically examine them.

III. ASSUMPTIONS IMPLICIT IN THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS LITERATURE

The underlying model in the effective schools literature appears to be basically an input-output model (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

INPUT-OUTPUT MODEL

If principals behave in certain ways, the model implies or suggests, then pupils will learn more. There are at least six assumptions that underlie this model. These assumptions need to be made explicit and critically examined, so that their soundness can be evaluated. They are:

1. The assumption that particular behaviors by principals are causally related to the observed outcomes. In fact, in virtually all of the studies, the behavior by principals is only correlated with the outcomes rather than being a conclusive cause of those outcomes. In some studies (very notably the Brookover et al. work and the Rutter et al. project), careful attention is paid to issues of research design in an effort to make causal inferences more plausible. In much of the literature, however, the results can only be taken as suggestive correlations, since the possibility of conditions, contingencies, or spurious factors is neither considered nor measured.

2. Most of the literature seems to assume that the principal is the only major participant in the situation. This takes several forms. An action on the part of the principal is assumed to have an effect on other participants, regardless of how they feel about that action or how that particular principal performs it. This assumption precludes the possibility that teachers, students, or parents might ever initiate anything in a school, particularly anything that might affect how principals act. This assumption also overlooks the possibility that other participants might react very negatively to a principal's actions.

3. This model tends to assume a tightly coupled system, despite the fact that a number of observers of educational systems have been struck by their loosely-coupled nature (e.g., Weick, 1976).

4. Carried to its logical extreme, the effective schools literature implies the search for (and possibility of obtaining) universal deterministic laws of principal behavior, without regard to the personality, place, educational level, people involved, or other conditions and contingencies of a school. Implicit in this approach is the view that somewhere there exists the "one best way" of being a principal. If only we can find this way and export it to all schools, we will be able to produce "more effective" schools everywhere.

5. The principal behaviors which are asserted to create effective schools are frequently presented in very vague and general terms, as Erickson (1981) among others has pointed out. It is very difficult to pinpoint exactly how principals do behave that is related to higher pupil performance. One reason for this may be the assortment of literature in the effective schools tradition which runs the gamut from carefully specified research studies (such as that conducted by Rutter et al., 1979) through very general discussions of what principals should do, based on asserted links between that behavior and pupil performance.

6. The dependent variable, pupil achievement, often suffers from the opposite problem in that it is frequently very narrowly and specifically defined, for example, in terms of pupil performance on some form of

standardized reading test. Such narrowly specific definitions of educational outcomes contain a number of problems which are discussed further in section VI.

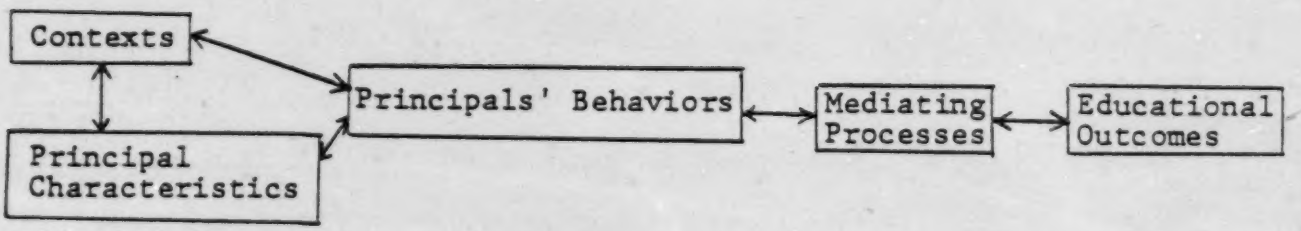
7. This literature is limited by the relative absence of any organizing theories that would help to explain or interpret the correlations which have been reported (as Cohen, 1979, and Good, 1981, note).

IV. A NEW MODEL FOR ANALYZING PRINCIPALS

In an effort to overcome some of the problems inherent in the assumptions of the input-output model, we propose an alternative conceptual model for viewing principal effectiveness (Figure 2).

Figure 2

PROPOSED MODEL FOR VIEWING PRINCIAPL EFFECTIVENESS



The assumptions in this alternative model also need to be made explicit, and doing so makes their contrast with the input-output model all the more vivid. These assumptions (or caveats) are as follows:

1. The model suggests various conditions and contingencies under which and through which certain relationships may occur. Doing this should provide a stronger basis for inferring causality, since critical tests can be developed to determine whether a particular set of conditions or contingencies is necessary and sufficient for the existence of a particular result. Our review of the literature, for example, strongly suggests that elementary and secondary schools need to be considered quite separately, yet the literature seldom tries to explore systematically what is unique about the different levels of education and how that might set conditions or provide opportunities to principals acting in the situation.

2. The proposed model assumes reciprocal and interactive relationships rather than unidirectional ones. How individual participants react to and define a situation will, in part, influence how they decide to act on it (as Sarason, 1971, so helpfully suggests). Individual participants may both initiate action and react to the action of others. Their action may vary as a result of others' reactions to it. Other participants may vary with respect to how they respond to an individual's actions (such as those of the principal).

3. The model calls for specifying connective processes that link principals' behaviors to specific behaviors by teachers, which in turn are

linked to improved instruction and pupil learning. The degree of linkage and the form those linkages take may be considered variables. In this way, neither a tightly-coupled nor a loosely-coupled system is assumed. Such a stance allows researchers to consider hypotheses such as that suggested by Cohen (1979) that more effective schools may be more "buresucratic" and tightly-coupled than less effective schools.

4. By emphasizing the conditions and contingencies associated with various outcomes, the proposed model is assumed to be probabilistic rather than deterministic in nature. This stance takes into account better the immense complexity of social action within school settings.

5. The model calls for the refinement of all the major classes of variables that are postulated as affecting educational outcomes, including principals' behaviors, mediating processes, and contextual conditions. We need to know considerably more about all of these factors and how they are interrelated before we can formulate good statements of probable outcomes.

6. We need to broaden our conception of educational outcomes to include measures of a number of important factors such as truancy, violent behavior, and self-esteem in addition to pupil achievement on a standardized test. Perhaps all the major participants in the educational process-- school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, students— should discuss what they consider the important outcomes of schools to be and what they would consider valid measures (with respect to face validity) of those outcomes.

With these caveats and assumptions clearly in mind, we can turn to the two major substantive features that have been added to this model, namely the conditions under which principals operate that may set constraints or provide opportunities for principals to act in some but not other ways and the processes that mediate between principal behaviors and outcomes. We have found a number of other research traditions particularly helpful in illuminating these two classes of variables, specifically the curriculum change and implementation literature, desegregation studies, research on instructional innovations (such a gaming and team teaching), supervision, and research on collective bargaining. These strands of research have been helpful in suggesting conditions and processes that the school effects literature has tended to neglect.

V. SOCIAL CONTEXTS AND PROCESSES THAT INFLUENCE EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

As the new model indicates, we believe that a principal's effectiveness is most usefully assessed within his or her larger educational and social context. The principal must negotiate with a variety of constituencies, not all of whom necessarily agree on the complex issues facing school administrators (Bossert, 1981: 2-5; Lipham, 1980: 3). In essence, "strong" leadership is the capacity to mobilize available resources in order to implement policies that lead to desired

outcomes. In order to mobilize her or his resources, a principal must have a good grasp of the possible and the ability to convince potentially competing groups to work together. In this section we outline briefly what we believe are some of the major contextual and processual factors affecting school leadership. Those factors that impinge on the school from without we call environmental contexts and those factors that are specifically related to the daily life of the school we call mediating processes.

A review of current literature on effective schools and principals illustrates the complexity of the environment in which principals must work. Schein (1970), in his work on organizations, points out that it is difficult to separate the school from the rest of society. What is the relevant environment of the school? Is it the community in which the school is located, is it the parents of the student body, or is it the society which is the ultimate consumer of the "product" which is turned out by the school? The picture is further complicated when we stop to consider that there are at least five different social entities with which principals must cope, all of which demand their attention to a greater or lesser degree. Federal, state, teacher union, school district, and community pressures all combine to make a complex environmental context for principals.

For instance, the principal's perception of his or her role in planning and implementing federal programs becomes crucial in terms of the

time constraints placed on almost all federal funding. When contracts expire the principal becomes the "gatekeeper of change" (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978) and must work to institutionalize the program in the school.

Berriott and Gross (1979: 200) found that federal agents sometimes neglect the role of participants at the school building level. Firestone (1977: 168) also cautions that innovators have to assure that goals are shared by all levels of the organization and that there is input by local participants even if the power this input implies is illusory.

A Rand study on the effects of federal programs on school principals brought a number of concerns to light. Hill et al. (1980) interviewed 55 principals in six states and found that most principals thought their jobs had become more demanding in the last five years, requiring longer hours, more paperwork, more time with individual parents and on the noninstructional needs of students, taking time away from what most principals view as their primary responsibility, instructional leadership. However, even schools without federal programs reported growing difficulties over the last five years in the same areas, indicating that the complexities of school management may be independent of federal programs.

At the state level, there are a variety of laws which affect the principal's effectiveness in the school. These laws affect the employment of local school personnel, such as tenure, retirement, certification and

special education requirements such as regulations of student/teacher ratios (Kehoe et al., 1981).

Erickson (1981) finds that "legally determined structural features of the schools" affect the social climate of the school, in that decisions made on the state and federal levels have a direct impact on the social relations of the schools. Teachers involved in special reading programs may be prohibited from providing services to children not in their programs; student payment for certain activities may exclude some pupils from participating in important activities, to cite a few examples.

Legal decisions and the unionization of workers sometimes go hand in hand in curtailing the power of the principal. State law has been responsible for eliminating the principal from collective bargaining activities in some locations (Lutz and Caldwell in Erickson, 1978: 257). Johnson (1981) concludes that the work of principals has become more difficult as the result of collective bargaining. The discretionary authority of the principal has been curtailed by the legitimization and standardization of the union's authority. Union contracts are not school-specific; they apply district-wide if not state-wide. Lutz and Caldwell (in Erickson, 1978: 258) point out that unions have copied the industrial model of collective bargaining that involves only top school system management and union officials. This power concentration at the top results in a standardization of policy which eliminates the principal's ability to deal unilaterally with his staff and routinizes his

duties in relation to both those above and below him.

Much of what goes on in the school building is, of course, determined by district policy. Duckworth (1981) has developed an important paradigm from which to build a theory of district policy. His paradigm acknowledges the importance of organizational hierarchy and includes:

(a) Policies which define general features of work structures for teachers and students in the classroom.

(b) Policies which affect administrators who carry out procedures to realize goals set at the first level.

(c) Policies which divert administrative work to functions other than classroom work.

How much policies divert the administrator depends in large part on the principal's political and personal abilities and how he develops ways to combat hierarchical restraints (Watson in Erickson, 1978: 47). District and school policies are shaped by the type of community in which they are located, the socioeconomic status of its residents, the size of the community and degree of urbanization. The community can exercise constraining influences on schools where an innovative program can fail if the community is against it, even if every other condition points to favorable outcomes.

Economic conditions in the community have a number of ramifications for principals as they try to do their jobs. Brookover et al. (1979) found that a declining population and a depressed job market in one

community meant the closing of certain schools and a consolidation of educational resources to maximize their use. Principals may have the job of supervising more than one school, and hierarchical relationships may change as a result. Teachers may view the principal as allied to the district or state department of education, charged with the responsibility of recommending terminations.

This brief discussion has touched on only some of the factors that make a principal's job complex and demanding. Yet, it would be simplistic to imagine that environmental pressures stop at the school door; they influence what goes on within the school, shaping the organization's internal processes.

As the model proposed indicates, principals' behaviors are modified and influenced by the processes that occur within the school building itself. According to Bossert (1981: 5), "individual personality factors interact with situational factors to provide effective leadership." We view these situational factors as intervening variables that substantially influence the possibilities of a principal achieving a desired outcome. Schools, as House (1979), Rutter (1979) and others have found, vary considerably with respect to their internal atmospheres. Below is a brief examination of the possible sources of this variation and an analysis of how certain variations in school organization may substantially mediate the relationship between principal behavior and student outcome.

One category of mediating processes are those relatively fixed

conditions which distinguish one school from another, for example, a school's form of control, grade level, physical plant, student and teacher demographics, curriculum, formal and informal organizational history, and educational objectives. Clearly there is a limit to the degree to which principals can influence many of these relatively fixed conditions (Noblit, 1979; Wolcott, 1973). Elementary schools, for instance, may be significantly different from high schools in terms of their curriculum, organizational history and educational objectives. Parenthetically, it is sometimes overlooked that schools generally have significant histories complete with folklore and ritual (Noblit, 1979). Sensitivity to a school's history may be an important administrative asset, whether or not a principal is seeking to introduce changes in the school's instructional or managerial organization.

Another set of mediating processes are those characteristics of schools that have to do with the interactions of people who meet each other on a daily basis. For instance, a principal's behavior may be shaped by whether there is a teacher's union and whether the union is strong or weak (Johnson, 1981). Certainly school organizations are influenced by the relations between students, between teachers and students, teachers and teachers, teachers and administrators, and students and administrators. Principals' behavior can also be influenced by whether student enrollments are declining or rising (Brookover, 1979) and whether or not a majority of teachers and students share the same

educational objectives. Moreover, principals' decision making effectiveness may be influenced by such political factors as formal alliances among teachers (the teachers union) and/or informal alliances (teachers with longstanding tenure).

The principal must respond to a wide variety of constituents even within the school building itself. Not only must principals deal with teachers and students, but they may also have to work with guidance personnel, parents, administrative staff, custodial and cooking staff, coaches, outside experts and advisors and representatives from the central administration, including the superintendent. Any realistic appraisal of how principals' behaviors are influenced by school organization needs to take into account the many diverse demands placed on principals in the course of a single day (Weldy, 1979; Gorton and McIntyre, 1978). But despite the demands placed on principals, many of them do create positive learning environments (Rosenblum, 1980; Edmonds, 1979; Doll, 1969; Rutter et al., 1979).

Much of the literature reviewed here underscores the theme that principals are "in the middle" and hence subject to a variety of competing interests. The literature appears to indicate that most principals cope with the problem of complexity by reducing their job definitions to manageable proportions. Wolcott has said that there is a "tendency among principals to reduce and constrain variation and, thus, to keep things manageable" (1973: 308).

Despite the fact that principals suffer from conflicting demands, many are judged by observers to be successful. Those who can successfully negotiate with potentially competing constituencies may be able to change the school ethos in what they consider to be a positive direction (Noblit, 1979).

Perhaps the line of research that best illuminates principals' behaviors in the context of specific school situations are studies of school change, whether the issue is desegregation, school safety, or curriculum innovation. In the area of desegregation, it was found by Noblit (1979) that a tough rule-enforcing principal was perceived to be a better administrator by his teachers and the community at large than a more humanistic principal because he was able to manage the problem of student violence in a clear and understandable manner. Had the effective principal in Noblit's study been placed in a suburban public high school perhaps the results would have been quite different (Chicago Safe School Study, 1981).

Another significant area where principals may play an important role in influencing student outcomes is in experimenting with the school's reward structure. Cohen (1979) suggests that altering the classroom reward structure along the lines devised by DeVries and Slavin at the Center for the Social Organization of Schools may produce greater student interest and effort. The Teams-Games-Tournament approach to classroom organization is one possible alternative to traditional reward structures.

Brookover et al. (1979) support this possibility, because they found that schools that used teaching games had a higher level of achievement than those that did not use such innovative techniques. (See also E.G. Cohen, 1979).

Some generic problems may face school principals. According to Pharis (1979), the major problems facing principals at the elementary school level are: dismissing incompetent staff, managing student behavior, dealing with declining enrollment, reducing staff, and evaluating teachers. The nature of these problems indicates that principals with strong interpersonal skills and clear objectives are likely to weather the periodic crises that are endemic to most schools (Rosenblum, 1980). What constitutes interpersonal skills may vary from one school setting to another, however.

Johnson (1981: 24) found that even in the area of labor relations and contract implementation, many contractual provisions are informally negotiated at the school site where "such factors as teacher interests, educational consequences, administrative leadership, and staff alliance are balanced and counterbalanced". Within the range of possible outcomes prescribed by the contract, principals keep certain areas within which they can negotiate with teachers.

From the literature reviewed here, it is apparent that a wide variety of mediating processes delineate or constrain the range of action available to a principal. Earlier we called for a probabilistic model of

how principal behaviors may influence student outcomes. The wide variety of mediating processes in schools makes such a probabilistic model quite complicated. Despite the complexity they introduce, however, it is worth considering such mediating processes in schools because they may have a significant impact on the relationship between principal behavior and student outcomes.

VI. CRITERIA FOR MEASURING PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS

The model proposed here not only calls for adding the major classes of variables we call social contexts and processes but it also suggests that the key variables be scrutinized more closely. To illustrate the type of scrutiny that we believe is needed, we examine closely the criteria used for measuring principal effectiveness.

Various criteria have been used to assess principal effectiveness, according to the major focus of the research being reviewed. When pupil performance is used as a criterion variable, it is usually measured with some kind of paper and pencil test. Various studies have differed with respect to the particular tests used. Edmonds (1979), for example, indicates that he used the Stanford Achievement Test and Iowa Test of Basic Skills in his Detroit study. In that case, effective schools were defined as having a reading average at or above the city average grade equivalent. In his reanalysis of the Equal Educational Opportunity Report

data, he defined schools as effective if they eliminated the relationships between successful school performance and family background. In his Search for Effective Schools Project, he used both local and normative, state and criterion-referenced tests to measure pupil achievement. Brookover and Lezotte (1977) used the Michigan Education Asssessment Program tests over time as the indicator of whether a school was improving or declining. They also looked for schools that were deviant cases, i.e., low income minority schools that had higher than average achievement, and middle income white schools that had lower than average achievement. They then compared these schools with others that were similar with respect to race and socio-economic status, but different with respect to pupil achievement.

Using norm-referenced tests as a measure of educational attainment overlooks the question of what most schools aim to teach. It seems reasonable to measure school effectiveness in terms of how well students master the curriculum of specific school programs, as Madaus et al. (1979) point out. They offer a helpful comparison of the relative potency of curriculum-based versus standardized tests for detecting differences between schools, and find the former to be much stronger. They also note that home background explains little of the variance in between-class achievement-- in fact much less than reported in other studies. In contrast to studies in the United States, Rutter et al. use the curriculum-based public examination results as their measure of academic

results. They find great differences in academic outcomes at various schools which persisted even when student ability, family background, and behavioral problems were statistically controlled. In this respect, their findings are consistent with other studies utilizing curriculum-based measures of academic achievement rather than standardized tests (Brimer, Madaus, Chapman, Kellaghan, and Wood, 1978; Brookover et al., 1979; Davis, 1977; Heyneman, 1976; Madaus et al., 1979; and Postlethwaite, 1975). All of these studies report differential academic outcomes by schools and note that such differences operate independently of family influences. The use of curriculum-based rather than standardized tests is probably the single most important reason why differences in achievement among schools were found by Rutter and his colleagues.

The implications of this literature for the measurement of principal effectiveness seems clear. How well a principal is seen to "be doing" may depend rather heavily on the test used to measure pupil performance. If this is the case, to what degree can test performance be used as a criteria of principal effectiveness? Furthermore, without an increased awareness of how principals might work to improve reading performance and some measures of whether or not the principal is trying to take the steps needed for improvement, it seems rather unfair to judge principal effectiveness solely on the end result.

An excessive emphasis on test scores runs the risk that school systems will get what they "inspect" rather than the underlying goals those

indicators are meant to reflect. Specifically, more than one educational observer has suggested that students are "prepped in school for standardized tests at the expense of broader educational activity" (asserted by New York City Mayoral Candidate, Mary Codd, New York Times, 1981: 51).

Goals like successful school integration or safe schools may be beyond the principal's power to produce. While they are clearly important characteristics of schools, should they be the criteria used to judge the performance of principals?

The literature we reviewed pays little attention to organizational processes that are analytically distinct from goal attainment, for instance organizational survival and tension management within the organization. These features may also be part of a principal's functions, and may occupy a considerable part of his or her time on the job. Indeed, the individual principal's job security may depend upon how well these functions are met.

One criteria variable that is conspicuous by its absence is the rate of student attendance in a school. While clearly attendance alone is an insufficient cause of student learning, all the time-on-task literature suggests that time spent in school is at least a necessary condition for student learning, particularly for low income and minority students. Future research on principal effectiveness might do well to include student attendance as one of a number of criteria variables. (How

strictly the principal pays attention to pupil attendance can make a difference in attendance rates as the National Institute of Education's Safe Schools study documents.)

Future research on attendance might consider the interconnections between attendance and disruptions in schools. Also, the causes of truancy might be explored, if this has not already been done by other researchers. Do students stay out of school because they are afraid of being robbed or beaten up, they feel they aren't learning anything, they feel teachers humiliate them, they feel embarrassed because they can't read, or they have not been properly prepared for some social change such as desegregation?

Another neglected criteria is the happiness of the children in a school. Despite the difficulties of measuring "happiness", the feelings of students in a school were noted only by Edmonds (1979), who suggested that students in higher achieving schools were also "happier." While often ignored by researchers because of its elusiveness, the happiness of the students in a school is considered by many parents if they are "shopping around" for a school in which to place their children.

VII. SUMMARY

A growing body of research on diverse features of educational systems has reached the conclusion that principals may play a key role in assuring

the success of an educational change or in creating a more effective school. Repeated studies concur that the "principal is the key to the quality of life in a school."

Several studies go beyond simply concluding that the principal plays a vital role in schools to suggest specific ways that principals may influence educational results. Effective principals hold a clear conception of the achievement levels they want to attain in their school and they appear able to share this goal with their teachers. In a related vein, effective principals hold high expectations for the achievement of all children in the school and they are successfully able to convey those expectations to teachers and to students. Principals may expect teachers to put in extra time to insure that students meet their achievement expectations, and they refuse to let teachers "write-off" students as non-learners.

Some effective principals stress their role as instructional leaders, sometimes helping teachers to decide on particular instructional strategies or providing helpful inservice training programs. Some principals help teachers to use positive rather than negative reinforcement as a teaching strategy that helps student learning.

Research on the personalities of effective principals reveals that they seem to have strong, dynamic personalities. They do not sit back and wait for things to happen. Instead, they take initiative and take charge of their schools. Research on the interpersonal styles of effective

principals appears to be mixed. Effective principals need to achieve some balance between authoritativeness and listening to what their teachers have to say about a given issue. Moreover, it helps if they are skillful at leading through indirection. Effective principals are able to get others to feel that they have a significant part to play in the programs or objectives that the principal favors.

Aside from encouraging the ideas and active participation of others in the school, effective principals are able to facilitate the actions of their teachers. If disorder is hindering learning, then principals work to establish discipline. If interruptions are a problem, the principal strives to reduce such interruptions. If teachers need supplies, release time, outside specialists, or special materials, an effective principal is particularly adept at procuring them. Effective principals continue their own growth and development and help their staff to develop as well. They do this by announcing their expectations, by providing a model in their own behavior of how they would like teachers to behave, and by protecting teachers who are performing at a high level.

One way that principals can encourage staff growth and development is by gaining control over key organizational resources such as schedules or materials budgets, and using those resources as rewards or sanctions. In order to do this, principals need to believe that they can take such actions in the situation in which they are operating.

Principals' effectiveness seems to be affected by how much time they

spend in their school building and by what they do with their time while there. Effective principals do not stay in their offices all the time. Instead, they are seen in the hallways and they visit classes.

Part of what principals may be doing when outside their offices is to evaluate teachers, programs, and pupil progress. Effective principals, especially in elementary schools, appear to have a clear idea of how individual children are progressing and how particular teachers are performing.

Reviewing this literature revealed a number of general statements about how effective principals behave. At the same time, it raised many unanswered questions and suggested that the effective schools literature rests upon a number of unexamined assumptions. First, this literature observes a correlation between a particular set of behaviors by principals and a given set of desired outcomes, e.g., improved pupil learning. By turning this observed correlation into a statement about effective principals, however, this literature is assuming that the principal's behavior actually caused the change in student achievement. Such an assumption may or may not be warranted. Second, by stressing the importance of the principal, this literature runs the risk of overlooking important other participants in the situation, such as teachers, students, and parents. Third, research stressing the importance of principals tends to assume that school systems are tightly coupled organizations, instead of treating the degree of coupling in a system as one of many variables

that affect what occurs within it. Fourth, drawing generalizations about effective principals seems to assume that there is "one best way" of being a principal that applies to all schools. Fifth, the exact way that effective principals should behave is never spelled out in great detail. Sixth, the criterion of effectiveness is often very explicit, however, and often refers to pupil scores on a standardized test. Seventh, this literature lacks an organizing body of theory that helps to explain why the observed correlations occur.

To overcome some of the limitations of the assumptions underlying the effective principals literature, we propose an alternative conceptual model that allows for various conditions and contingencies that may affect the way principal behaviors influence pupil performance. In this approach, for instance, the other participants in a school are assumed to interact with principals, possibly affecting how they behave. In addition, we urge that all the processes which are believed to influence educational outcomes continue to be refined and specified in future research. The concept of principal behaviors, for example, is generally quite vague in the literature reviewed here. At the same time, we caution that educational outcomes not be defined exclusively in terms of scores on a standardized test.

A reasonable objective of research on effective principals is to make probabilistic statements about the conditions under which various educational outcomes are more or less likely. Such a goal requires us to

identify some of the many social contexts and processes that impinge on school administrators. In this report we examined several such contexts and processes as examples of the social relations that need to be included when considering the issue of effective principals. Effective principals do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, they are adept at negotiating with a variety of constituents, including teachers and their unions, parents, pupils, school districts, state departments of education, and federal agencies. Behavior, such as tough rule enforcement, that works effectively in one context may fail in another setting. Recurrent problems like evaluating teachers or negotiating union contracts call for interpersonal skills, but the form in which those skills are effective may depend on particular settings.

While it was clearly impossible to provide an exhaustive treatment of relevant social contexts and processes in this report, our purpose was to illustrate the point that an adequate model of effective principals must include a discussion of the social contexts and processes that influence principal behavior.

Similarly, by examining the criteria used to measure principal effectiveness, this report seeks to demonstrate the critical scrutiny that needs to be directed at all the major concepts in the model. Pupil outcomes vary, depending on whether norm-referenced or criterion-referenced tests are used. If this is the case, a principal's effectiveness may rest rather heavily on the particular test that is used.

Besides running the risk of evaluating principals unfairly, exclusive reliance on test scores may lead to schools that overly emphasize test-taking, to the detriment of other forms of learning, happiness, and organizational goals such as managing tension within the system.

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Appendix A

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Appendix B

THE BEGINNINGS OF A RESEARCH AGENDA

In this section we would like to suggest some of the research questions that arise from the literature reviewed and the model proposed. We consider first some methodological issues that need to be addressed by future research on principal effectiveness and then pose a number of substantive questions.

The effects of a principal's behavior on student outcomes needs to be envisioned within a multivariate framework rather than as a relationship between an input and an output. Without conceptualizing and measuring a considerable array of conditions and contingencies that might affect whether and how a principal's behavior is related to pupil outcomes, there is no way that causality can ever be inferred. Too many possibly spurious factors might lie behind the relationship. Secondly, in order to be able to generalize from such research studies, we need a design that includes either randomly selected samples or cases that are purposively selected with a view to matching cases that are similar with respect to key contextual and processual factors, but different with respect to principal

behaviors and pupil outcomes. This design is exemplified in the Brookover et al. (1979) study. Unfortunately, much of the past research on effective schools has been based on samples of convenience rather than random or carefully matched samples, with the result that one cannot generalize with confidence from them.

A third methodological consideration deals with the way key variables are conceptualized and operationalized in the literature. As noted earlier, the principal's characteristics (for example, "vision") and behaviors are defined only in the vaguest possible way, and are never clearly spelled out in operational terms in the literature we reviewed. Other bodies of literature beyond what we reviewed might prove very helpful here (e.g., Bossert et al., 1981; Morris et al., 1981). Future research should aim to be very specific about what it is that principals do that has a particular effect on pupil performance. Instruments do exist that might be useful for measuring some features of principals and how they behave, for example, personality inventories, measures of authoritarianism, and measures of school climate. These instruments might be used in future studies. If they are not, newly developed instruments should address issues of reliablity and validity. Face validity is a problem for the dependent variable of interest. Is a reading test score an appropriate measure of principal effectiveness? What other criteria of effectiveness should also be considered and how might they be measured? Is there agreement on what goals should be measured?

Fourth, future research should try to use methods of triangulation, or alternative ways of measuring the same concept, like Dornbush and Scott (1975) did in their study. Interviews in which people say what they think or do could then be compared with observations of what people actually do.

Finally, if variables were well conceptualized and measured, some effort could be made to compute correlation coefficients and to do multivariate statistical analysis using multiple regression or other statistical techniques. This would provide one type of evidence for inferring the relative importance of different types of conditions and processes.

With respect to substantive questions, we would reiterate here the importance of being sensitive to the other functions that schools must and do fulfill which need to be included in future research even when the primary focus is on goal-attainment. Schools have important socialization and custodial functions that cannot be overlooked. Future research should recognize that all the criteria for effectiveness are imperfect and incomplete, and that there is no clear hierarchy with respect to the relative importance of the goals of education. One strategy for dealing with this problem is to use multiple criteria of success.

Future research should aim to identify conditions and contingencies that specify or mediate how principal behavior is linked to pupil outcomes. One way of doing this would be to do comparative ethnographic studies that observe behavior unfolding over time. Contextual factors at

the national level, such as the level of violence in a society, might well be associated with the degree of violence in schools. Such a variable could only be addressed by cross-national research.

A series of more specific research questions also arise from the literature and model we consider. Each of these particular questions should be considered within the context of a multivariate, probabilistic model that includes measures of some of the key processes and contexts that we specified in the model. These questions include the following: Is sex or race related to principal personality traits? If school contexts and processes were held constant, exactly what principal personality characteristics affect pupil outcomes? How do they do so? Further exploration should be done on the concept of "locus of control" in relation to principals, and students. Are people with an internal locus of control more likely to adopt innovative teaching strategies, for example? How are principals persuaded of the value of particular innovations? Under what contextual conditions are principals able to establish consensus on achievement as an educational goal? How do they do this? Through what mediating processes do they communicate those goals to teachers and students? How are principal and teacher expectations related to the selection of instructional strategies? Under what conditions is the role of principal as instructional leader widely accepted by teachers in a school? Does it vary widely by level (elementary/secondary), organizational structure, district organization, or community demands?

Why is it that some principals are much more effective instructional leaders than others? Does the number of years they have been on the job make any difference? The type of training they had prior to becoming a principal? Their interpersonal style? What support conditions are necessary within a school to enable a principal to be an instructional leader? How do principals deal with their department heads? How highly specialized are the functions in the school? To what degree is social distance from teaching staff a necessary element in a principal's interspersonal style? How do principals balance strong leadership with participatory decision-making? How do they learn to do this? How do principals establish relatinships of trust with their teachers? Does school size, racial composition, SES, or any other contextual factor influence the establishment of trust? What conditions and contingencies break down or buttress trust relationships between principals and teachers? Does "plain speaking" on the part of principals increase the growth of trust? Is trust a necessary ingredient in being an effective principal? What facilitates the creation of constructive order in a school as opposed to oppressive control? (How might such loaded terms be measured in any reasonably objective way?) What strategies do principals adopt that reduce non-instructional interruptions?

How do principals deal with competing goals, whether from different constituencies or from within the same ones (for example, for order vs. education [Metz] or equity vs. self-confidence [Hargrove et al.])? To

what degree is diffuseness of goals functional for the organization? Under what conditions are principals able (and willing) to make evaluation criteria of pupils and teachers explicit? On what basis are principals evaluated (this should include the covert as well as the overt basis). How does that affect how they spend their time and energy? How do principals follow-up on the evaluations they do of their teachers? How do their teachers react to being evaluated?

How much of the organizational potency of the principal is due to background characteristics (e.g., a background in law) and how much to constraints or opportunities provided by the context? Who are the other major participants in the principal's field of action, and how do they behave in relation to the principal?

Future research should conceptualize and measure the major contexts which may shape the principal's behavior. These might include control over key resources, the existence of competing agendas being placed on the school by the federal or state governments, labor contracts, school districts, or local communities. The same holds for mediating processes which need to be specified and measured in order to describe and explain how principals effect the results claimed. Among these processes might be the organizational features of schools that shape principal behaviors, the school's history, the way the union functions within schools, the influence of other constituents on school processes, and experimenting with alternative instructional strategies.

This list of research questions is meant simply to be suggestive of what the literature reviewed and the model proposed here might offer in the way of leads for future research.